

587 into another *ptso*. After the presents this permission is always given automatically.

If the man accepts the girl offered the *asék* is performed one year after the death of the first wife, and the marriage usually shortly after. For second marriages the ceremonies are similar to first marriages but on a rather smaller scale; both the presents and the feasts are only about two-thirds as expensive as for first marriages. When widows remarry the ceremony is slightly altered, and the bride enters her husband's house on the first, instead of the second, day of the marriage feast. Except for sororate spouses it is considered rather difficult for a widower to get an unmarried girl for his second wife, especially if his first wife died young, for this is believed to be a sign that he is unlucky; consequently it is fairly usual for widowers to marry widows. The situation is naturally altered if a widower makes an unmarried woman pregnant.

● 837 587 Among the Lepchas a man can inherit the wives of all his elder brothers, real or classificatory, the wives of all his paternal and maternal uncles real or classificatory, provided these 'uncles' are younger than his parents but not younger than himself, and all the younger sisters of his wife, real or classificatory. Conversely a woman can be inherited by all her husband's younger brothers, all the sons of her husband's uncles, and all the husbands of her elder sisters, real or classificatory. With all these potentially hereditary spouses the Lepcha has the right to copulate during the lifetime of their husbands (or wives) and in nearly all cases these rights are taken full advantage of, as opportunity offers; opportunity is naturally greater with people who live in the same district, and distance often prevents men taking advantage of the right to sleep with the younger sisters of their wife, and women with the husbands of their older sisters, since they most often live in different parts of the country.

837 With the wives of their real elder brothers Lepchas have in theory a right to use force, if they will not copulate willingly; the younger brothers are considered to have contributed to the marriage price of the bride and therefore to have, as it were, a legal right. In point of fact such a use of force never arises; Lepcha women know that their husbands' younger brothers have the right of access; and casual sexual relationships are so unimportant emotionally for Lepchas that few women would think it worth while making a fuss. If the women have a real repulsion for their husband's younger brothers nothing can be done about it, for,

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- 837 as several Lepchas said when the point was raised 'Who can force a grown woman against her will?' More distantly related women, such as 'aunts', may put up a certain amount of semi-playful resistance, but no rancour is felt if it is overborne.

It is considered to be an act of excessively bad taste to copulate with a heritable wife in her husband's presence, or in such situations that there is a possibility of his witnessing it. These legalised adulteries usually take place during the husband's temporary absence, or else outside the house, in the forests or fields or field-houses; these outdoor encounters are usually very brief, and have a slightly romantic flavour. Copulation inside the house has the advantage of giving longer time, but it also exposes the couple to questionable remarks and a good deal of teasing.

- 836 One of the results of this situation is that almost all boys and
864 young men get their first real sexual experience and training from an older married woman. Elder brothers usually explicitly instruct their younger brothers in their rights. In Lepcha theory a woman should never make direct sexual advances—the common Lepcha words for sexual activity are, like the English ones, transitive and one-directioned—but in point of fact I found that in nearly every case men had had their first real sexual experience with the wife of an 'elder brother' or 'uncle' at the woman's direct invitation and solicitation. This is considered altogether desirable; although sexual activity is thought to be as natural and as necessary as eating, it is necessary that boys should be taught to do it properly. Thus Chudo said one day 'If I caught Chimpet (the son of his elder brother Tafoor) sleeping with my wife I shouldn't be cross at all; on the contrary I should be very pleased, for she would be teaching him how to do it properly and I would know that he was in the hands of a good teacher! On the other hand, if I caught a married man, who had a right to sleep with my wife, doing so I should reproach them for their lack of shame in doing in my presence what might better be done in my absence; if I was really angry I should tell other people about it, so that everybody might know how shameless the man had been.'

- 614 I have already suggested that the *ptso* was possibly earlier a
835 geographical unit; if this were the case, it seems to me possible that these permissive regulations were evolved to meet the special circumstances. For, with the *ptso* as the geographical unit, the young men would have had no possible sexual partners except through adultery or incest; and, as numerous examples show, such

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it was not her first experience, though it was his. Subsequently his parents tried to betroth him to her, but she was already bespoken. 833

I unfortunately was not able to obtain as much or as precise detail on the early sexual life of women as I was of men;⁴ from such information and reports as I was able to gather it would seem that potential sororate spouses play a much smaller rôle in the initiation of young girls, chiefly no doubt because they generally live some way away. When they are not deflowered by their spouse (this happens sometimes) girls would seem to start their sexual life with unrelated men, often it would appear with visitors to their village. Among the Lepchas the difficulty of talking to women on such subjects was not, as more usually happens, the jealousy of the husbands, but the fact that almost every woman from eight to eighty interpreted any sort of special attention as an attempt at seduction, an attempt which—no matter what their youth or age—they had no intention of repelling. 836

Until the husband brings his wife home, and indeed till the birth of the first child, Lepcha men and women have complete sexual freedom at every point where this freedom does not endanger the social fabric; that is to say that all potential partners outside the stringent incest categories are permissible, provided that adultery, as the Lepchas understand the term, is not flagrant, continuous or emotionally important. After the birth of the first child adultery—that is to say connection with a woman who is not a potential wife—on the part of the father is thought to endanger the life of the child or children. Except for casual encounters at the forest or at feasts my impression is that adultery is uncommon, and that copulation with permitted partners only takes place intermittently in the absence of the actual spouses. 837

Lepcha sexual experience can be divided into four categories: legitimate copulation with one's spouse, which almost always takes place in the house; semi-legitimate copulation with potential sororate and levirate spouses, which usually takes place either in the house during the husband's temporary absence or in casual encounters in the forest or field-houses, since it is considered tactless to allow the husband to witness such copulations; thirdly, intrigues with unmarried girls which entail clandestine visits by the young man by night; and, lastly, sudden and clandestine encounters 836 837

⁴ I was told the precise details of the early sex experience of at least half the men of Lingthem, but only three or four of the women. It was one of the most popular subjects of conversation among the men at the monastery feasts.

836 which may or may not be adulterous, in the fields or forests or at
 ● 837 big feasts. The last-named are always excessively hurried and
 rather romantic; hurried because there is the fear of being surprised
 and romantic because they are unforeseen and unprepared. Occa-
 sionally to seduce an unmarried girl men will promise to give them
 presents of money and clothes and they will do so if the woman
 consents; she will either tell her parents that she has bought the
 new clothes, or, if this is too improbable, that she has borrowed
 them. If the woman refuses, men do not insist. It quite often
 happens that a girl will give her lover small presents—straps she
 has woven herself or food smuggled out of the house in her dress.
 It is said that presents are not given to seduce married women.

836 If unmarried and unrelated men and women wish to sleep
 together, the man will find out from the girl her exact sleeping
 position in her house; then at his own home he will wait till he
 can hear everybody sleeping, creep out on hands and knees, run
 to her home, which may be a couple of villages away, and creep in
 beside her. He must return to his own home before cockcrow.
 Normally if a man is surprised he will run away and not come
 back again; but it occasionally happens that these originally clan-
 destine intrigues become socially recognised and the lover goes to
 live, either temporarily or permanently, with his mistress, particu-
 larly if the latter is past the age of childbearing. Thus Patek's
 'elder grandmother', the sixty-six-year-old Nandjému, has as
 paramour a lover of the same age, a lama who travels round the
 country making prayer wheels; whenever he is in the neighbour-
 hood of Lingthem he lives with the old woman as her husband.
 Similarly Kurma lived with his first wife, Gongyop's sister, for
 some years before he married her.³ If the wife is of childbearing
 age she will more often go to live with her lover, especially if he is
 a householder in his own right; thus Tobge's sister lived with
 Nahyeun, Tempa's sister with Jiroong, and Ongden's second wife
 with her husband for considerable periods before their marriages
 were legitimised.

837 Sex does not form part of the Lepcha pattern of hospitality, but
 if a visitor can make his own arrangements this is agreeable to all
 parties. In such cases once the visitor has got the girl's consent to
 sleep with him he learns from her the exact position of her sleeping
 place, and visits her as quietly as possible as soon as the rest of the
 company are apparently asleep.

³ See Chapter Fifteen, pp. 398-399.

One day at a wedding (it was a rainy day), near the
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shed which was put up for the bridal party he copulated with a girl carrying a child about four years old. The girl stood with her back to a tree, clasping it with her arms behind her head and lifted one leg. But at the moment of orgasm she let go and fell sideways; nobody was hurt. The child made no comment. [159X] [833]

April 2nd.

Kurma up all day, chiefly talking about hunting and ritual and told about the reason why his family are no longer good hunters. He also talked about dreams and their meanings and explained that one of the results of adultery is that the deceived husband will dream of the *tafep*—ladle used for pouring out *chi*. Kurma said that he had had such a dream during the life time of his second wife; he was later informed that the dream was founded on fact, but since he had seen nothing he could do nothing. He denied that he had ever had any sort of overtly sexual dreams or dreams of committing crimes. [837] [826]

April 4th.

Tafoor was present most of the morning describing funeral ceremonies. Kurma came up rather late. He talked about the poltergeist manifestations with which Pong rum had plagued him after he had given up hunting.

April 6th.

Kurma came up and discussed adoption, illustrating the disadvantages for the adopted child by his own reminiscences. This was the first time that he enlarged in detail about his own past life.

That day Kurma complained of heart pain which is due to the presence of Shook-sor *moong*. Two nights ago his mother-in-law dreamt of a kite on the roof which signifies the presence of Shook-sor *moong* and the day after Kurma had these pains. Shook-sor *moong* can only pain humans but can kill animals. Its exorcism, which must be performed by a Mun or Padem, is relatively simple, but a Padem cannot cure himself. [53]

Kurma explained that since he had run away he had no claim on his adopting parents' property, which now goes to their nephews. [428]

On this day also he first talked about Hlatam and her faculty for poisoning and said that his second wife had been killed by her.

159 some of the Lamas were in the habit of spending occasional
 [783] days fasting in the building. Amongst these was the Dorje-
 Lopön; and so it was that the two became acquainted. After
 159 a time they got to know each other better, and it seems that
 ● 837 they were in the habit of telling their beads together in the
Hla-gong. Ordinarily this conduct would have passed
 unnoticed; but in these particular circumstances it was most
 reprehensible in view of the fact that Jiroong had been the
 pupil of the Dorje-Lopön, who was thus his senior in rank.
 The Dorje-Lopön, however, had by now decided that life in
 Lingtem was too good a thing to be missed; and so it was that
 he decided not to return to his other two wives. Jiroong knew
 perfectly well what was going on; and while he did not care
 particularly for his wife, he could take no action, since to
 [793] complain of his senior's conduct would have been an offence
 against ecclesiastic discipline. Things went on in this rather
 unsatisfactory manner for several months, when the Dorje-
 Lopön thought his position sufficiently stabilised for him to
 visit Jiroong's wife in her own home; but this was rather more
 than the village would stand. Attempts were now made to
 induce the Dorje-Lopön to return to his two former wives;
 but without success. All this happened about seventeen years
 ago, when the Dorje-Lopön must have been about sixty-five
 years old. A meeting was now called of all the local Lamas,
 headmen, and Youmis. They considered the case and
 decided that the Dorje-Lopön must go back to his former
 wives. This he flatly refused to do, and went so far as to say
 that they could kill him before he would consent to leave
 Lingtem. A compromise was therefore arrived at by which it
 was decided that the Dorje-Lopön should allow his two former
 wives to come and live with him in Lingtem, which they
 did. By this time his son by his first wife was already married
 and had four children of his own. Chapshay and Atyok,
 wives two and three, now came over to Lingtem and took up
 residence with Datoop, with whom the Dorje-Lopön, his
 father, was then living, having promised to see no more of
 Jiroong's wife. It looked as though the affair had been

amicably settled, for nothing happened for the next five¹⁵⁹ weeks. It then transpired that the Dorje-Lopön and⁸³⁷ ● Jiroong's wife had made a private arrangement to meet from time to time, and that they had not the slightest intention of putting an end to their affair. During this time, although the Dorje-Lopön was living in the same house as Chapshay and Atyok, it was noticed that he had no relations with them; and it was on this account that people became suspicious. Chapshay and Atyok put up with this state of affairs for a further three months and then departed to their own home. An official protest followed and this time a divorce was⁵⁸⁶ arranged, as a result of which the Dorje-Lopön was required to give one ox, one pig, one copper-pot and twenty rupees in cash as compensation. As he had no ready cash he borrowed⁴²⁶ the twenty rupees from the monastery funds; and has still not liquidated the debt. Having settled this affair he announced that he had done with women for the rest of his life, and that henceforth he would remain celibate. He went so far as to say that he would not marry Jiroong's wife even should the opportunity occur. Two months later Jiroong went down to the Mandal, told him that the Dorje-Lopön had again started meeting his wife, and asked what he should do. Another meeting was held; and as a result of its deliberations Datoop was ordered never to let his father out of the house by himself. The Dorje-Lopön, although head of the monastery, was told of this order and specifically warned that he must only visit the monastery for the purpose of attending public ceremonies, and that in no case was he ever to enter the *Hla-gong*. In spite of this the old man still contrived regularly to meet Jiroong's wife, as a result of which her husband decided to divorce her. For some time all three lived together in Jiroong's house, and in the meantime the Dorje-Lopön helped Jiroong in his fields.

Poor Jiroong deserved a better fate than has actually been¹⁵⁹ his lot. After a number of friendships here and there he grew⁵⁸⁷ tired of an aimless existence and decided to marry again. There then came to the village the sister of Tempa. She was

159visiting her brother, who had left his home and settled in
 587Lingtem. She was not too old, unmarried, and not un-
 comely. Jiroong started to visit her; and soon decided that
 she was the one girl who could change his life: she was. He
 worked hard in his fields; and before long had saved enough
 money to buy the necessary pig. Tempa was willing to let his
 sister go; and so the two were married. They now have two
 children of their own; but life is not all roses. Mrs. Jiroong,
 it appears, is fond of the bottle; and when she indulges
 displays an uncontrollable temper. Although he is now a
 senior Lama, Jiroong has to submit to the indignity of
 [837]finding his wife debarred from entering the monastery. This
 he could bear; but unfortunately his wife cares nothing for
 monogamy. He could bear this too, if only she would
 entertain her friends in private.

159 When Jiroong married again the Dorje-Lopön and his
 latest wife decided to set up house on their own. She died a
 few years later and he now lives alone with his only other
 child, a boy of eighteen, whose mother was the fourth wife.
 Although still titular head of the monastery the old man finds
 it hard to make ends meet. He was rich at one time, but his
 money, and that of his son, has mostly gone in smoothing out
 his matrimonial tangles. At eighty-two he is looking for a
 [831]sixth wife; but the girls in Lingtem, like the widow who
 married Tristram Shandy's Uncle Toby, are somewhat
 doubtful of his ability to please them.

* * * * *

[837] The second Dorje-Lopön is sixty-nine, and entered into
 matrimony for the first time only a year ago, when he
 married an elderly Mun, Pom-ri, on the death of her
 husband; but the pair had been lovers for forty years. The
 Dorje-Lopön always called himself a celibate; but this is
 what actually happened: While he was still a boy, his elder
 159 brother was married, but shortly after left for Gangtok,
 595 leaving his wife at home. The Dorje-Lopön would in any
 case have had the right to cohabit with her; but in this

159 for the girl to marry both brothers. If this is done only Pichi
 585 will be required to carry out the ceremony; and having done
 588 this he can hand the girl over to his younger brother. There
 would be no objection to him marrying what would
 theoretically be a second wife, should he later wish to do so.

159 In the meantime Pichi gets all the amusement he wants with
 ● [837] his elder brother's wife. This he told me late one night when
 he was somewhat the worse for wear. In addition to his own
 [191] language, he also speaks Sikkim Tibetan and is the only man in
 the village who can read and write Nepali. Because of this all
 official correspondence comes to him for translation. He has
 not yet fully readjusted himself to the simplicity of village life,
 but, even so, already thinks he would rather live at home.

[582] Datoop's wife is one of the most outstanding characters
 in Lingtem. She was married at twelve but did not live
 with her husband until after his return from Gangtok.
 Unlike most other women, she is often to be seen in charge
 [462] of work and her orders are instantly obeyed. She has the
 reputation of giving good food at her house, but, according
 to Tafoor, would be a better cook if she took a little less to
 drink. She has a pleasing open face, but her appearance
 is somewhat spoilt by a missing canine tooth. She came
 originally from a village beyond Mangan, and still visits her
 old home occasionally, where her brothers are still living.

[301] She has better jewellery than any other women in the
 423 village; this she bought with the proceeds of her private
 fields. In her opinion women have a hard time, and no
 private life at all. She thinks, however, that grown-up girls
 [587] are glad to get away from home and that marriage is the
 best state for them. Like her husband she, too, is a Lama
 and holds the rank of Chötembu; and as such has the power
 to beat up people in the monastery. I asked her what sort
 [684] of offences would merit her interference and she replied,
 without the slightest hesitation, "having sexual intercourse
 inside the building, or within its grounds." She added that
 it would be considered slightly shameful for a woman,
 although an Inebu, to beat a man; but nobody really minds.

[59] for the purpose of keeping hail away while the harvest was being reaped. Pashu asked Karma why he had run away: "I never did anything wrong to you," he said, "so when I return you had better come with me." This Karma refused to do. "Although I am your adopted son," he said, "you did only evil to me": but Pashu refused to acknowledge the truth of this. Once, in a fit of anger, he had told Karma to return to his own home, and he now reminded him of this. The Dorje-Lopön was also present at this time and advised Karma to stay where he was. Whenever he had previously run away, as he did on several occasions, his mother had always beaten him and sent him back: but he was then quite small. This time his mother merely said: "Go back, if you wish, or stay here. You are big enough now to decide for yourself, and it makes no difference to me." Karma's stepfather was pleased at his decision, as he was himself finding [593] life none too easy. His wife was devoted to her youngest son, but she did not care overmuch either for Karma or his elder brother, and was long since tired of her husband. Karma, however, always liked his stepfather, and was glad to stay at home and help him.

- [637] After he had been living at home for about a year his elder brother fell in love with his paternal uncle's wife, and used often to go with her to the forest. The man's brother knew of this and scolded him for allowing such a state of affairs to continue, as a result of which the two brothers quarrelled. Before the younger of the two uncles was married he was in the habit of sleeping occasionally with his elder brother's wife. From the Lepcha point of view there was nothing wrong in this; but the elder decided that it was time to arrange his younger brother's marriage. The girl selected did not care for her husband and spent most of her time with Karma's [762] elder brother. When her husband found out what was happening he took it very much to heart and shortly afterwards poisoned himself. Karma's brother was held responsible for the tragedy, and told that the least he could do [682] was to pay for the necessary death ceremonies. To this he

159 to have an altar-room, and also a set of books, to read which
 342 Lamas are called in as necessary. I noticed that by means of
 622 bamboo conduits water was made available inside the house,
 [312] where it dripped into a huge copper vessel. This was the only
 334 house in Lingtem which might be described as having
 "running water."

159 The Mandal was an only child, and when his father had
 587 already handed over most of his work, he adopted another
 boy in order to have someone to work the fields. On the
 death of his father the Mandal handed his wife, of whom he
 was growing tired, over to this adopted brother; and then
 married again. The first wife died shortly after, whereupon
 the Mandal gave his brother the second; and himself married
 a third. The second wife, who died four years ago, did not
 care for this arrangement and soon returned to her own
 home, whereupon the adopted brother was presented with
 wife number three; and the Mandal married yet again.
 [585] Since he and his brother were living in the same house no
 ceremony was performed when these cast-off women were
 handed on; but this would have been necessary had the two
 brothers been living in separate houses. The Mandal has an
 only daughter, and passionately desires to have a son. It is
 this, he says, that has led him into matrimony time after
 [789] time; and he has not finished yet! The people saw he will
 never have a son, since in the time of his father a curse was
 laid on the family. This was done by an evil-minded Lama,
 who thought that if there were any more children they would
 claim the land adjacent to their house. This was the pro-
 perty of some people who had died without heirs, and it had
 not at that time been reallocated.

159 It is generally believed that the Mandal is not the son of his
 [648] supposed father, who was impotent. Once, when the father
 was absent from home, his mother, anxious lest the family die
 out altogether, induced a certain man to come and visit her
 daughter-in-law. The story is known to the whole of the
 159 village, and is said to have been made public by Chala's own
 837 biological father. He appears to have been a man of

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outstanding physique; for Chala's mother, when she was an old woman, later told her son that she was terrified at their first encounter. He seems also to have been noted for his promiscuity, a trait which Chala has himself inherited.

In addition to his official duties the Mandal gives much thought to the arrangement of local marriages. He has been doing this for so many years that he has now come to think of young people principally in terms of their suitability as possible marriage partners. He has so far acted as go-between for no less than sixty couples, and nowadays nobody ever thinks of asking anyone else to undertake this duty. In these cases he is called in not as village headman, but merely as an experienced member of the community whose opinion is trusted. His duties as Mandal, however, take him frequently to all the surrounding villages, and since he is on intimate terms with everybody, he is always in a position to make suggestions. Many marriages are of course settled by the families or individuals concerned; but even in cases such as these certain formal arrangements are later thought to be necessary. The ordinary man does not know the correct form of speech proper to such occasions, and for this reason the Mandal's services are still in much demand.

The Mandal's knowledge of his district is encyclopædic, and although he can neither read nor write he is able to quote without hesitation or mistake details of local administration which one would normally expect to find only in a book of statistics. He is slightly ashamed of being illiterate, but does not realise that his memory is quite extraordinary. He never smokes, and drinks less than others because he has to remember everything "in his heart and belly," as the saying is, and might otherwise forget. Because he was ill and lived a long way away we did not see a great deal of him, but on the few occasions when he came to the monastery his great delight was to sit on a chair. The only ones we had were of the camp variety; and having been with me all over the Himalayas were in the last stages of disrepair, and liable to fall to pieces at any moment. To the

mother milked on to it. When this is done the milk on the⁸⁴⁵ stone at once dries up with a frizzling noise: this is an example of what Frazer calls "sympathetic magic," and is done in the hope of stopping lactation.

There appears to be no cessation of sexual intercourse up⁸⁴³ to the time a child is born, but a man does not sleep with⁸³³ his wife for the seven days following birth. We shall see,^[837] later on, that certain men other than the husband also have the right to sleep with a woman, but it is thought that the husband alone should have relations with his wife once it is known that she is pregnant. Sexual relations in general will be discussed later, but this seems a suitable place in which to mention the special ritual sexual intercourse, called *Tung Bong Zum* (the meaning of which words I have been unable to discover), which takes place between the husband and wife on the seventh night after the birth of a child.

It is believed that many women suffer from severe pains⁸⁴⁶ in the stomach during the first few days following their⁸³³ delivery; and especially is this the case when there has been no hemorrhage. The condition is known as *Saklong*, a word which denotes that a woman has had no flow of blood following the descent of the afterbirth. To prevent this condition the woman is given hot soup, fish boiled in butter, and other hot food immediately she begins to feel the labour pains; and if it cannot be treated at once it is thought that the woman will die. But of much more importance in the cure is the *Tung Bong Zum*, as it is thought that the man's semen will cause the pain to subside. On this occasion, the man enters the woman from behind and is particularly enjoined not to be violent. It is said that many men do not care to copulate in this fashion; but on such occasions the woman will not permit them to adopt the normal position. Once the *Tung Bong Zum* has been performed normal sexual relations may be resumed; but some women do not allow their husbands to have regular relations with them for another twenty days or so, or until such time as they have thoroughly recovered their strength. Very occasionally the

CHAPTER 11

MARRIAGE AND GENERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SEXES

595 **C**ONTRARY to the reports of earlier travellers, the Lepchas (at least in Jongu) do not practise polyandry, except in very rare circumstances. It is true that their customs permit it; but in actual practice two brothers only share a wife when one is continuously away from home. The only known cases have already been noted in the chapter of personal histories. When polyandry does occur it is always, as in Tibet, what is technically known as adelphic polyandry, that is to say the co-husbands are always brothers; and in discussing the subject the idea that a woman could be married to two men who were not themselves brothers (in the full biological sense) appeared never to have entered the people's heads. Whether it would be possible for a woman to marry more than two brothers at a time I do not know, since a case of this sort has not occurred in Jongu. I imagine that [17] polyandry, such as it is in Jongu, has arisen entirely as a result of contact with Tibetans. It appears to be unknown among Lepchas of other districts, and in discussing the subject the Mandal was definitely ashamed to own that it sometimes occurred. "It is not a good thing," he said; "but it is common among Tibetans, and is sometimes a convenience when one brother is more or less permanently away from home. For this reason I have occasionally recommended, as in the case of Pichi and his brother, that a girl should be married to two brothers."

595 A distinction must, however, be drawn between marriage
 ● 837 and sexual relations: for while it is unusual for a Lepcha girl to be actually married to more than one man, it is common for her occasionally to sleep with all his younger brothers. The important point to note, however, is that she is not married

595 to them, whereas in a true polyandrous society each of the
 837 men concerned is a legal husband, and takes his place as
 such at the wedding ceremonies.

835 It will perhaps make the situation clearer if I explain the
 sexual rights of a Lepcha in tabular form.

A man may sleep with:

1. The wives of all his elder brothers, and their younger
 sisters, whether married or not.

2. The wives of his father's younger brothers, and their
 younger sisters.

Bearing this in mind it can be seen that the youngest of
 seven brothers, for instance, whose father was himself the
 eldest of seven more brothers would have the legal right to
 sleep with no less than twelve women; but this is assuming
 that none of the women concerned had any younger sisters.
 This is, of course, a purely theoretical example and in actual
 practice many of the women would not normally be available
 since their husbands would probably be living in different
 villages: but even so, it means that many a man has "a home
 from home," so to speak, in several of the surrounding
 villages. In the two categories mentioned above the woman
 concerned cannot refuse the man's advances. He has a legal
 right to copulate with her, and may, if necessary, force her to
 submit against her will. But in addition to all these women
 837 with whom a man may legally sleep, there is no moral
 835 objection to his doing so with any women with whom he can
 trace a like classificatory relationship. But in this case the
 matter is entirely dependent upon the woman's willingness
 to co-operate: she cannot be forced to submit. In actual
 practice the result of all this is that in a small village there are
 very few women with whom a man may not amuse himself.
 This was certainly the case in Lingtem; but there were one or
 two unfortunate only sons who had, legally at all events, to
 confine themselves to their own wives. A great many men,
 however, do also have affairs with other women, of which
 little notice is taken, even by the husbands concerned: but

835 in no case would a man ever have any sexual relations with
 ● 837 the wives of his younger brothers, or with a woman of the same clan as himself. This would constitute incest; and while it is practically impossible to investigate the subject, I am inclined to think, by reason of the horror with which it is regarded, that incest does not occur.

587 In addition to the sexual rights which a man has with his
 428 elder brothers' wives it is customary for a widow to be inherited by one of the deceased's younger brothers, preferably the next in succession. Should he have no brothers living the widow may pass to a nephew. It makes no difference if the man in question already has a wife of his own: the widow comes to him as an additional wife, but in no case is any marriage ceremony performed, the woman being merely inherited in the same way as any other piece of property. It is not to be supposed, however, that this arrangement is carried out without the consent of both the parties concerned. The woman is at liberty to remarry with whom she wishes; but it should be remembered that the man who would be legally entitled to inherit her (*Oong-op* is the technical term in use) has probably cohabited with her for years, as a result of which the pair are probably on intimate terms, so that the new relationship is merely a public recognition of a long-standing arrangement. Because of this, most widows are perfectly content to remain with one or other of their deceased husband's brothers.

It sometimes happens that a widow is herself perfectly willing to be inherited by a man who does not care for her, or who, for some reason or other, does not want an additional wife. In these circumstances he need not take her into his home, but it is incumbent upon him to find the woman another husband. In a case of this sort the full marriage ceremonies would have to be carried out, and the usual gifts provided, the expense of which would fall, not upon the proposed husband, but upon the man who should by rights have taken the widow into his own home. Should the reverse happen, and the widow be unwilling to go to an